

five District Court judges just this week. We held a hearing for five more District Court nominees yesterday. We have an additional three District Court nominees who could be considered as soon as they finish their paperwork and answer questions about their criminal histories.

Thus, having confirmed 13 District Court judges in record time, we could confirm an additional eight with cooperation from the White House, nominees and our Republican colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Terry L. Wooten, of South Carolina, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of South Carolina.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Terry L. Wooten, of South Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina? On this question, the yeas and nays have been ordered, and the clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CLELAND) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. MILLER) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 333 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Akaka	Durbin	Lugar
Allard	Edwards	McCain
Allen	Ensign	McConnell
Baucus	Enzi	Mikulski
Bayh	Feingold	Murkowski
Bennett	Feinstein	Murray
Biden	Fitzgerald	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Frist	Nelson (NE)
Bond	Graham	Nickles
Boxer	Gramm	Reed
Breaux	Grassley	Reid
Brownback	Gregg	Roberts
Bunning	Hagel	Rockefeller
Burns	Harkin	Santorum
Byrd	Hatch	Sarbanes
Campbell	Helms	Schumer
Cantwell	Hollings	Sessions
Carnahan	Hutchinson	Shelby
Carper	Hutchison	Smith (NH)
Chafee	Inhofe	Smith (OR)
Clinton	Inouye	Snowe
Cochran	Jeffords	Specter
Collins	Johnson	Stabenow
Conrad	Kennedy	Stevens
Corzine	Kerry	Thomas
Craig	Kohl	Thompson
Crapo	Kyl	Thurmond
Daschle	Landrieu	Torricelli
Dayton	Leahy	Voinovich
DeWine	Levin	Warner
Dodd	Lieberman	Wellstone
Domenici	Lincoln	Wyden
Dorgan	Lott	

NOT VOTING—2

Cleland Miller

The nomination was confirmed.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now return to legislative session.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES— H.R. 2833

The PRESIDING OFFICER. With regard to H.R. 2833, under the previous order the Senate insists on its amendments, requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses, and the Chair appoints Mr. GRAHAM of Florida, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BAYH, Mr. EDWARDS, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. KYL, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. HATCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. THOMPSON, Mr. LUGAR; from the Committee on Armed Services, Mr. REED and Mr. WARNER, conferees on the part of the Senate.

Mr. ALLEN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I be permitted to proceed as in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOOD SAFETY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, earlier this week I introduced the Imported Food Safety Act of 2001. Food safety has long been a serious public health concern in America, but awareness of the vulnerability of our food supply has heightened since September 11.

I have long been concerned about the adequacy of our system for screening and ensuring the safety of imported food. In 1998, in my capacity of chairing the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, I began a 16-month investigation of the safety of imported foods. This investigation revealed much about the Government's flawed food safety net. Regrettably, in the intervening years little has changed, and now we must acknowledge that the systemic shortcomings can also be exploited by bioterrorists.

As part of the investigation, I asked the General Accounting Office to evaluate the Federal Government's efforts to ensure the safety of imported food. In its April 1998 report, the General Accounting Office concluded that "Federal efforts to ensure the safety of imported foods are inconsistent and unreliable." Just last month, the GAO reiterated that conclusion in testimony before the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management.

During the 5 days of subcommittee hearings that I chaired, we heard testimony from 29 witnesses, including scientists, industry and consumer groups, government officials, the General Accounting Office, and two individuals with firsthand knowledge of the seamier side of the imported food industry—a convicted customs broker and a convicted former FDA inspector.

Let me briefly recount some of the subcommittee's findings which make clear why the legislation I have introduced is so urgently needed.

First, weaknesses in the FDA's import controls—specifically, the ability of importers to control food shipments from the port to the point of distribution—make the system very vulnerable to fraud and deception, and clearly vulnerable to a concerted bioterrorist attack.

Second, the bonds required to be posted by importers who violate food safety laws are so low that they are simply considered by some unscrupulous importers to be a cost of doing business.

Third, maintaining the food safety net for imported food is an increasingly complicated and complex task, made more complicated by previously unknown food pathogens, such as Cyclospora, that are difficult to detect. Our recent experience with anthrax has taught us there is much that public health officials still need to know when dealing with such pathogens and bacteria.

Fourth, because some imported food can be contaminated by substances that cannot be detected by visual inspections, grant programs are needed to encourage the development of food safety monitoring devices and sensors that are capable of detecting chemical and biological contaminants.

Fifth, since contamination of imported food can occur at many different places from the farm to the table, the ability to trace outbreaks of foodborne illnesses back to the source of contamination requires more coordinated effort among Federal, State, and local agencies responsible for ensuring food safety, as well as improved education for health care providers so that they can better recognize and treat foodborne illnesses. Again, our recent experience with anthrax underscores the need for better coordination and education.

Since the terrorist attacks that occurred just weeks ago, we have been living in a changed world. We are battling enemies who show no regard for the value of human life, and whose twisted minds seek to destroy those who embody democracy and freedom. It has never been as important as it is now to ensure that our food supplies are adequately protected against contamination, both inadvertent and intentional.